This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 07603539 7

LENOX LIBRARY
AUCTOR PRETIOSA FACIT
Duyckinck Collection.
Presented in 1878.

TRUTH;

A

NEW YEAR'S GIFT FOR SCRIBBLERS.

'Defensor culpæ dicet mihi, "Fecimus et nos
Hæc juvenes." Esto. Desisti nempe nec ultrà
Fovisti errorem.' JUVENAL.

'Lignorum aliquid posce ocius, et, quæ
Componis, dona Veneris, * * * *, marito.' JUVENAL.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY STEPHEN FOSTER.
1831.

LENOX LIBRARY
NEW YORK

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS....TO WIT:
District Clerk's Office.

Be it remembered, that on the twentythird day of December, A. D. 1830, in the fiftyfifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Stephen Foster, of the said district, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following *to wit:*

'Truth; a New Year's Gift for Scribblers.

'"Defensor culpæ dicet mihi, 'Fecimus et nos
Hæc juvenes.' Esto. Desisti nempe nec ultrà
Fovisti errorem." JUVENAL.

'"Lignorum aliquid posce ocius, et, quæ
Componis, dona Veneris, ****, marito." JUVENAL.'

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;' and also to an act entitled 'An act supplementary to an act, entitled an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.'

JNO. W. DAVIS,
Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

PREFACE.

I HAVE often said to myself, when disgusted by newspaper puffs of would-be poets, 'Why suffer thyself to be incommoded by things so trivial? The people endure these vermin—why shouldst not thou?' Satisfied with this mental adjuration, I have heretofore been silent, esteeming satire too noble a weapon to be employed in extirpating insects. At last, the evil has become intolerable; the whole atmosphere is filled with the legs and wings of all sorts of ephemera. I take up my newspaper, at breakfast, and at the first glance encounter a violent panegyric on some youth, who has undertaken to fly on wings more waxy than even those of Icarus. I sally forth, and am asked by the first friend I meet, 'Have you seen ——'s new poem?' I go to the Athenæum, pick up an American review, and open at Mr Doolittle's 'Horæ Ambrosianæ, a Poem,' and am assured 'that Mr Doolittle, with a little

more energy, and a great deal less negligence, will do much to establish a first-rate, tip-top reputation.' I go to my shoemaker for a pair of boots, and he presents me with the Daily ———, in which there is a copy of verses by the celebrated poetess, Mrs Blue, and asks my opinion of her prospect of immortality. Thus am I annoyed from morning till night.

I have no quarrels with, or personal dislike to, any individual of the scribbling race. I wish they could write better; I wish they would give more time and attention to their productions, or, I wish they would not write at all. The conductors of newspapers have been in the habit, in almost all instances, of flattering our young aspirants. These must now hear the language of truth; for I verily believe that the itch of rhyme has withdrawn more persons from the useful pursuits of life than the doctrine of rotation in office, which is a bold word; and I therefore consider it my bounden duty to sacrifice some of these young cocks of Bantam to Esculapius, in hopes of retrieving the sanity of the rest.

I attack none in a *personal* manner, who have not themselves offended in the same sort. To these

I say, 'Those who live in houses of glass should not throw stones.' True, you have thrown none at me; but you have at others, and I take it upon me to punish your repeated breaches of the peace in a summary manner. 'What is sauce for goose is sauce for gander also.' May the castigation produce amendment, to the extent that you shall never be scurrilous again. Though some of you are incorrigible, such may be made useful by way of examples.

With respect to the propriety of serving up authors, some of whom are respectable as private individuals, for the public amusement, I can do no better than quote some sentiments of Byron, in which I heartily concur.

'An author's works,' he says, 'are public property; he who purchases may judge, and publish his opinion, if he pleases: my object is, if *possible*, to make others write better.'

Again;—'No one can wish more than the author, that some known and able writer had undertaken their exposure; but in the absence of the regular physician, a country practitioner may, in cases of absolute necessity, be allowed to prescribe his nostrum, to prevent the extension of so

deplorable an epidemic, provided there be no quackery in his treatment of the malady.'

I have been told that caustic reproof may blight the hopes of a young and sensitive poet, and stop him short in the beginning of his career. In some very few instances this may have happened. The laws of the land, too, and much more often, operate hardly on individuals; but this consideration is no argument against their beneficial influence, and is not suffered to obstruct the course of justice. By a parity of reasoning, a poet must sometimes endure severe but just criticism, for the good of the community. Moreover, I believe that few plants worth cultivating are so delicate as to be incapable of bearing wind and sun.

Wherever I have found ability at all above mediocrity, I have acknowledged it, though obscured by a thousand blots. Where talent does not exist, the literary hopes of the writer ought to be blasted, even for his own welfare; and it will give me pleasure to perform the service.

TRUTH;

A

NEW YEAR'S GIFT FOR SCRIBBLERS.

Moths, millers, gnats, and butterflies, I sing;
Far darting Phœbus, lend my strain a sting;
Much courted virgins,* long enduring Nine,
Screw tight the catgut of this lyre of mine:
If D-na, D-wes, and P--rp-nt ask your aid,
If W-ll-s takes to rhyming as a trade,
If L-nt and F-nn to Pindus' top aspire,
I too may blameless beg one spark of fire;
Not such as warmed the brains of Pope and Swift—
With less assistance I can make a shift:
To Gifford's bow and shafts I lay no claim;
He shot at hawks, but I at insects aim:
Yet grant, since I must war on little things,
Just flame enough to singe their puny wings;
A feather besom, too, to bring them down,
And pins to stick them in my beaver's crown.

* ———Narrate, puellæ
Pierides: prosit mihi vos dixisse puellas!—*Juvenal.*

O Faust, O Faust! an' if thy story 's true,
In thee the Devil only got his due:
In bullets moulded and by nitre hurled,
Thy types had done less mischief to the world.
Thou wretch, if spirits can reply from hell,
The purpose of thy black invention tell.
Couldst thou not see thy press and printing tools
Create an endless jubilee for fools,
Whole herds of dunces throng this luckless land,
Like shoals of cod on fishy Newfoundland?
Couldst thou not see our loathing public crammed
With verse on verse? Most justly art thou damned.

I hear a voice that cries, 'Lift up thine hand
Against the legions of this locust band.
Egypt was plagued with frogs, and lice, and fleas;
Columbia's plague is worse than all of these:
Arise,—o'er each delinquent wield the scourge;
On brain-sick youngsters try a healing purge;
Serve, serve them up, like smelts upon a string,
And o'er their books a final requiem sing.
Arise,—convince thy country of her shame;
Rise, ere her genius be no more a name.'
Roused by the call of Duty, I obey;
I draw the sword, and fling the sheath away.

But where begin?—When vermin thus abound,
No shaft I shoot can bloodless reach the ground.

Lo! paddling down the Nashaway, in a scow
Of his own building, Rufus makes his bow,
And sings how Peggy, erst the kitchen's pride,
Became enamoured, pined, and whined, and died;*
Then tells how strangely salmon swim up stream,
And stranger still, how wolves and 'peckers' scream;
Or names the fount that washed his school-boy chin.—
Pity the booby did not tumble in!
In time, perhaps, our servile bard may find,
Of two who ride one horse, one rides behind;
And, peradventure, learn that Goldsmith's steed
By Goldsmith only can be urged to speed.
A pause,—and Rufus croaks another air,
About a sprite that dwelleth everywhere:†
He 's wrong; for 'Beauty's Spirit' never shines
Through the impervious dulness of his lines.
His last sheet printed, and his volume out,
Vainglorious Rufus anxious looks about,
Anticipates due praise, and trembling fears
To have the critics all about his ears.
Superfluous care! nor praise nor blame is heard;
Not even snarling T***** growls a word.

* A scullion is, doubtless, a very useful and respectable personage. Every one knows that; but it required a D-wes to discover that 'a saucepan is an instrument fit for the music of the angelic choirs.'

† 'The Spirit of Beauty is everywhere.'—*D-wes.*

Stung with the slight, resolved to rouse the pack,
On the whole town he pens a dire attack:
His Strokes and Strictures * meet with equal scorn,
And, like his poems, leave the press still-born.

The fount to which, in Boston's earlier day,
Men came to drink, and went refreshed away—
The fane our pious pilgrim fathers sought,
To hear the Saviour's vital precepts taught—
The Church, is now the club-room of small wits;
The desk 's the nest where Dulness brooding sits,
And hatches by the score such chicks unclean
As Pinney, W-re, † P--b-dy, ‡ Doane, § and Deane, ¶

* I ought to mention here, for the benefit of those who are so unhappy as not to have seen the production, that a very kind and gentle satire was published in Boston some months since, with the title of 'Strokes and Strictures.' It purported to be by Alexander Smythe, but was written by D-wes. It was not puffed, even by the Traveller!

† Messrs Pinney and W-re are two of those poets whose pieces we may read, indeed, but never remember a line of them.

‡ P--b-dy. Ditto. Author of an unnatural 'Hymn to Nature.'

§ The Rev. Mr Doane I throw in as a makeweight, or rather as we take a glass of water, in itself insipid, to wash the taste of three or four disagreeable pills out of the mouth. He has written one or two good things, which ought not, however, to excuse a cart-load of trash. His book is called 'Songs by the Way.'

¶ Deane. Like the three first in the line. He would not have been noticed but to make the rhyme. His first acknowledged work was 'The Populous Village,' a *poem!* May it be his last!

Who thrive upon their mother's milk so well,
They chirp in numbers ere they chip the shell.

Hark! little wool, great cry! that doleful whine
Is P--rp-nt's, howling Airs of Palestine:*
Prime parson, but poor poet; sells, in short,
Soup for the alms-house, at a cent a quart.
His motive 's good, but yet I grieve to tell
The crude concoction never would, will sell:
Scarce any food to Yankees comes amiss;
But saw-dust better relishes than this.
P--rp-nt, a man may be of judgment clear,
Have taste, and talent, and a faultless ear,
Yet be no poet: be advised by me;
Stick to thy pulpit; let the Muses be.

A sail, my muse! Pursue in full career;
Train our bow-chaser on this privateer;
This pirate rather, for his flag is black—
Let 's lay the whip upon his recreant back:
'T is C-sw-ll, stupid servant of the Lord,
Who steals his strain from Wordsworth, word for word.†

* 'Airs of Palestine' was printed (perhaps written) for the benefit of the poor in Baltimore. Their dividend of the profits, unless I am misinformed, amounted to $0. I have often asked what other pieces this author has written, but never found any person who could tell. I should have remained in ignorance to this day, had I not stumbled on them in Kettle's 'Specimens of American Poetry,' where the reader, if he has an hour to throw away, may read them.

† One of Wordsworth's pieces, called 'Sonnet Vindicatory,'

I'll take his stolen goods, but harm him not;
Poor Devil, he 's not worth another shot.

When clumsy Vulcan strives to forge a watch,
'T is ten to one his work will prove a botch:
Each to his trade—there 's Edward,* learned, wise,
Great in the world's opinion, madly tries
To scale Parnassus, makes his readers sick
(To use his own vile rhyme) of Alaric—†
His empty lines contain instruction yet;
They prove '*poeta nascitur, non fit.*'

Muse, shall we not a few brief lines afford
To give poor Natty P. his meet reward?
What has he done to be despised by all
Within whose hands his harmless scribblings fall?

was copied in the columns of the Episcopal Watchman, of which Cr-sw-ll was editor, without credit, and in the manner in which the editorials of that paper always appeared. This might have been accidental, but the piece was afterwards published by Kettle as Cr-sw-ll's. As Cr-sw-ll never divested himself of this borrowed feather, I consider the charge in the text established. His lawful property nobody will take from him.

* 'The Dirge of Alaric the Goth.' As Willis has already damned this thing (which he calls a *ballad*) by praising it in the same number which extols the Comic Annual, it is unnecessary to say more about it.

† This rhyme, which violates sense as well as the rules of rhythm, runs thus;—

'And Roman hearts shall long be sick
When men shall think of Alaric.'

Why, as in bandbox-trim * he walks the streets,
Turns up the nose of every man he meets,
As if it scented carrion? Why, of late,
Do all the critics claw his shallow pate?
True, he 's a fool;—if that 's a hanging thing,
Let Pr-nt-ce, Wh-tt-er, M-ll-n also swing.
When W-ll-s saw the light, 't is said his sex
Did for a month the neighbourhood perplex.
('T is doubtful now.) Desiring much a son,
His parents put the coat and breeches on;
And grateful Natty, mindful of their loves,
A true *Tiresias redivivus* proves;
Except in this, he lacks Tiresias' fire,
And always goes abroad in male attire.
While yet a boy, (by which I do n't infer
He 's now a man,) his brains began to stir
With throes ambitious. 'We shall see,' he cries,
'If I do n't make the natives ope their eyes!'
Forth comes the volume. David screams with pain,
And Absalom his son expires again.†

* Vanus et Euganeâ quantumvis mollior agnâ.—*Juvenal.*

† 'Absalom, Jephthah's Daughter,' &c. were commended as 'works of great promise.' If they were, their promise has never been fulfilled.

It is not my wish to accoutre this person with a nick-name; but as it is impossible to reduce the name Nathaniel to any sort of harmony, I am compelled to use the abbreviation Nat, or Natty. This is countenanced by Persius, who, in the line below, seems to have had a prophetic vision of this worthy.

Non pudet ad morem discincti vivere Nattæ.

My hand, if child of mine had made such slip,
Had cured his cacoethes with a whip.
Then Natty filled the Statesman's ribald page,
With the rank breathings of his prurient age;
And told the world how many a half-bred miss,
Like Shakspeare's fairy, gave an ass a kiss.
Long did he try the art of sinking on
The muddy pool he took for Helicon;
Long did he delve and grub, with fins of lead,
At its foul bottom, for precarious bread.
All geese, nay, goslings, much delight to roam,
And cats called Thomas seldom stay at home;
So Natty, all aspiring, leaves his den
Apollo minimus of little men,
And keeps a public house, where, monthly, all
Are served with fragments from some musty stall.
Ah, Nat! I've too much charity by half;—
I cannot slay and eat thee, though a calf.
Dishonest critic, and ungrateful friend,*
Still on a woman thy stale jokes expend;
Live—at thy meagre table still preside,
While foes commiserate, and friends deride;

* *Dishonest critic.* It is well known that W-ll-s abuses the works of his personal enemies, and praises those of his friends, without regard to their real merit, or rather to their want of it. Witness his eulogy of M'L-ll-n, and his sweeping condemnation of the Token. I forbear to explain the words '*ungrateful friend*,' from regard to his feelings.

Yet live, thy wonted follies to repeat;
Live, till thy printer's ruin is complete;
Strut out thy fleeting hour upon the stage,
Amidst the hisses of the passing age.*

So much for scolding; come now, Natty, come
To me, poor thing, and get a sugar-plum.
The rod, I think, has made thy cutis sore,
Thou writest so much better than before.
With father's love I 've watched thy mind unfold,
And joyed to see some spangles of pure gold.
Bright with intrinsic light 'The Leper' glows,
'The Alchemist' no common genius shows.
Low as thy credit is, some hopes remain;
Write more such verse, and see it rise again.

Hast thou, my reader, felt the frowns of Fate?
Hast lost thy purse, thy character, estate?
Has every cherished hope thy breast forsook?
Hast thou no trade?---No matter—write a book.
Try prose, or better still, poetic flights,
For Brother Jonathan in verse delights;
So shall the papers all thy work extol,
And thou, in time, thyself the press control.
What if no college gave thee a degree,
What if the muses never smiled on thee,

* At pulchrum est, digito monstrari, et dicier, Hic est?
Persius.

What if thy book is careless, flat, and tame?
To Yankee editors 't is all the same:
Fear not the whipping to thy folly due,
Some 'damned good-natured friend' shall help thee through.
But if thou hast no editorial friend,*
Straight to some well-known print a copy send;
For that 's the current value of a puff;
Then send a copy, and have praise enough.
Or, what 's a very common way to bribe,
Go to the printing-office, and subscribe.
Bribe, bribe the editor, and hear him swear
That Homer never cooked a dish so rare.
To gain attention art thou doubtful still?
Behold what piles of drugs the bookshops fill:
Here W-tm-re stands; M'L-ll-n here is seen;
There W-ll-s, with his Monthly Magazine.
By puffs reciprocal, by hook or crook,
Each draws the public eye upon his book.
When these, and such as these to publish dare,
Need thou, need any one on earth, despair?
But if thy book be good, beware of spite;
The dog that wags his tail for sops can bite.

* If *editorial* be not a good English word, it ought to be. There is no other in the language that expresses the same ideas, I shall, therefore, use it, though it has not the sanction of Johnson.

Does any critic view thee with distaste?
To stretch the hand of Friendship out, make haste.
All provocation given straight recall,
Else shall thy first-born offspring pay for all.
Lo! one, reviewed himself, in turn reviews;
Another, whom his outraged tailor sues,
Uncorks the vials of his wrath, and reaches
To pour them on the tailor's coats and breeches.
Some criticise from malice, some for pay,
But most for want of something else to say.

Here 's milk-and-water M-ll-n, just from Maine,
His native fogs condensed within his brain.
Where gottest thou, O M-ll-n, so much brass,
To think thy farthings might for guineas pass?
'Sad Tales and Glad Tales'—very sad indeed;—
Sad 'Dreams' and sadder 'Visions' next succeed;
Saddest of all,—to make his foes rejoice,
In strain satiric last he lifts his voice;
And, bent on taking common sense by storm,
Calls on his kindred dunces to reform;
Vainglorious deeming, that to christian ears
His yell will seem the music of the spheres.
What time the brazen poet raved and sung,
Misusing shamefully the English tongue,

The only blows he ever made to tell,
On taste and on his hearers' patience fell.
  Good reader, has it never given thee pain
To hear a warbling girl her gullet strain?
Just so it fares with M-ll-n; for a while
He sung, and made the indulgent public smile;
But raise his note so high!—his case is bad;
Bring a straight jacket, for the man is mad.*
He write a satire!—He presume to call
(Himself the very longest eared of all,)†
His fellows asses!—He presume to chide
At zanies!—'t is a downright fratricide.
His impudence, restricted to the bar,
Would push his fortune, Heaven but knows how far.
  Unnatural M-ll-n, how, how didst thou dare
Fowls of thy proper kind to rend and tear?
Were the same measure meted out to thee,
How great, poor fellow, would thy sufferings be!
  'But is his work so very dull?' you ask.
Buy it, and if you can, perform the task

* O medici, mediam pertundite venam!—*Juvenal.*

† Auriculas asini quis non habet?—*Persius.*

‡ I trust that I shall be pardoned for not treating this writer with the severity he deserves. It is true that few American scribblers have done so much to degrade the literary reputation of the country, but no one of them sustains a higher character, as a man. For the latter of these considerations I spare him.

Of reading; if your judgments then disclose
Whether 't is rhyme or blank, or verse or prose,
'T is more than mine can, though I read it through:
You stare,—but on my sacred word 't is true.

Dismissing M-ll-n to the state of mist,
The name of P-uld-ng* next adorns the list;
A name well worthy of no second place
On the dark record of the land's disgrace.
When first ambitious hopes his heart inspired,
The itch,† congenial theme, his fancy fired:
A theme that Nature did express devise,
To find his hand its proper exercise:
So well his pen the subject seemed to match,
And brought his thoughts so promptly to the scratch,
That all who read, this common inference drew,
He wrote with feeling, and from knowledge too.

* Repeated failures have not convinced this man of his imbecility. He still continues to write, and may be considered incorrigible. At this present writing, I hear that he has produced a prize comedy. I hope it is like nothing he has before given to the world.

† *The Lay of the Scottish Fiddle*, is a very miserable parody. I read it about ten years ago, since which I have not seen a copy.

On mountain ridges, over stump and stone,
His coach poetic next goes jolting on,*
Until the passengers, with tears and groans,
Complain of aching heads and broken bones,
And swear, if once they reach the level plain,
Never to patronize 'that line' again;
But rather go on foot for all their lives,
Than trust the car that such a Jehu drives.

Arch demon raiser of the realms of rhyme,
Great horror monger of the eastern clime,
Monk Lewis, look this way, behold thy ghosts,
Scared by a Yankee fiend, stand mute as posts.
Scattering our babes and sucklings sans remorse,
Comes D-na, charging on his spectre horse.†
He lights, to let us know how Matthew Lee
His master's weasand slit, then went to sea,
Turned pirate, burnt a ship, and, strange to tell,
By his own bonfire light rode off to hell!

* *The Back Woodsman, a Poem.* This work is not like Homer, or Pope, or Dryden, or Byron. All that can be said positively of it is, that many of the lines appear to have been intended for pentameters.

† It is really deplorable that D-na should choose such topics as would disgrace the pages of a dream-book. His powers are really respectable, and should be better employed.

Classic the theme, and classic are the words
That leave the lips of D-na's gallows birds.
Ah! D-na, on the seas no longer roam,
But ring 'Home Changes' quietly at home;
Cut short, I pray thee, thy career of rhyme.
Know, what disgusts can never be sublime.
But if, resolved such pictures to exhibit,
Thou needs must steal thy subjects from the gibbet,
Select thy hero from the realms of evil,
To horse again, and gallop to the Devil.

Since, Muse, a rest thy wearied pinions crave,
Alight, and weep on Brainard's early grave.*

* If, in this paragraph, the appearance of an imitation of Lord Byron's apostrophe to Kirke White should be discovered, let it be remembered that the case of Brainard was similar to that of White. It was very difficult to avoid copying. If I had borrowed his idea, he did as much by Waller.

Brainard was far superior to Kirke White as a writer, and as a man was inferior to no one that ever breathed. He wrote under every disadvantage, and, as might be expected, the faults of his writings were neither few nor small. At the same time he had the stamina of poetry. Had he received encouragement sufficient to awaken his energies, his name would have lived forever. He was wholly unconscious of his own strength, and threw off his best pieces without hesitation or premeditation. To this carelessness his literary faults must be attributed. In this, too, he is not alone among American poets, most of whom, it seems, write as carelessly as Brainard, though by no means as well. I wish I could mention three of them who equal John Gardiner Calkins Brainard, or six who even approach his excellence.

Lamented Brainard! since no living line
Records thy worth, I 'll make that merit mine:
Be mine the task to make fresh roses bloom,
And shed undying fragrance on thy tomb.
In thine own mind our cause of mourning grew—
The falchion's temper cut the scabbard through.
Hard, hard thy lot, and great thy country's shame,
Who let such offspring die without his fame.
He pined to see the buds his brow that decked
Nipt by the bitter blight of cold neglect.
Torn from the tree, they perished one by one,
Before their opening petals saw the sun;
While the same chilling blast that breathed on them,
Froze the rich life-blood of the noble stem.
But not neglect, nor sorrow's rankling smart
Could sour the kindly current of his heart;
And not the canker that consumed his frame
Could to the last his eagle spirit tame;
With faltering hand his master harp he strung,
While music echoed from his dying tongue,
Then winged his passage to a higher sphere,
To seek the glory we denied him here.
Fair Cygnus thus, while life's last pulses roll,
Pours forth in melody his parting soul.

Sit down, good guests, the cloth again is spread,
The bill of fare exhibits a calf's head:

'T is L-nt's *—the brains I cannot give; the lout
Long since on Byron's tomb-stone beat them out.
L-nt is no poet, he has no pretence
To taste or talent—scarce to common sense:
I searched his scribblings for a painful hour,
To find some traces of the mighty power
Dunce Kettle † gives him; deeper as I went
I found myself the farther off the scent:
Then, wroth to be beguiled of time by stuff
As stale and worthless as a Traveller puff,
I tore the volume, in my rising ire,
And put it where it should be—in the fire.
L-nt, bless thy great good luck! My strain shall save
Thy else forgotten poems from the grave.
Stuck *in terrorem* to the rhyming race,
Hundreds shall be deterred by thy disgrace.
The Muse's mount thy figure shall adorn,
Hung like a scare-crow in a field of corn.

As when a rocket climbs the vault of night,
And briefly falters in its fiery flight,

* George L-nt is the author of 'The Grave of Byron and other Poems.' N-al treated Byron badly, but L-nt worse, inasmuch as in the minds of his readers the name of the noble poet is associated with recollections of ineffable stupidity.

† I spell this name as it is universally pronounced, and as I believe it was spelled by those who first imported it.

Yet starts again, as it begins to fail,
Upborne by bursting blasts beneath its tail,
So overrated Spr-g-e is seen to rise,
Puffed by the papers to the very skies.
Great is his merit,—greater still his fame;
Bright, but not dazzling, burns his steady flame.
His is the sterling bullion, thrice refined,
Right from the rich exchequer of his mind.
Sense, strength, and classic purity combine
With genius in his almost faultless line;
Trained in the olden school, his tide of song
Bears truth and judgment on its breast along.
Forbid it, Justice, this brave bard should lie
On the same coals that cooked the smaller fry;
Yet to the tainted plague-spots on his hide
The friendly caustic needs must be applied.
My heart sweats blood, that he, so prized by all,
Should only string his harp at Mammon's call.*
'T is clear his bank accounts and studies clash:
He counts his numbers as he counts his cash.
Too plain his verses show the marks of toil,
And each and every distich smells of oil.†

* He writes only for prizes and on public occasions.

† Lamp-oil is undoubtedly an essential ingredient in the composition of a poem; but the author should not show it like a lamplighter. Few of our songsters can be accused of this fault. However, it is better to be as redolent of oil as Spr-g-e, than to grate on the ear for want of it.

Dead on the ear his accents often fall;
Though just, yet harsh, and something dull withal.
Stern Truth declares that his is not the art
To rouse the fancy, or to touch the heart.

Stoop very low, my muse, apply the lash
To J. O. R-ckw-ll,* author of such trash
As in this age of trash is seldom seen---
Not even in the Monthly Magazine:
R-ckw-ll, who somewhat conscious he 's a bore,
Signs very properly his pieces J. O. R:†
R-ckw-ll, who sometimes hammers out a line,
Perhaps by accident, that 's really fine;
But in the self-same breath, to make amends,
Fires a broadside of nonsense at his friends.
That R-ckw-ll ever writes is strange indeed---
Stranger that any can be found to read:‡
Yet those whose time the Statesman serves to kill,
May, with a relish, gulp this smaller pill.

Blown by the breath of Flattery off his legs,
Lo! weak M'L-ll-n§ screws his tuneful pegs;

* This person is thus justly described by Mr Solomon Southworth;—'A flat who occupies the counting-room of the Providence Phœnix, to the misfortune and disgrace of his worthy publisher.'

† Query, Jaw?

‡ Quid refert, tales versus quâ voce legantur.—*Juvenal.*

§ If this youth had been content with the corner of a newspaper, he would have escaped flagellation. *Indulge veniam pue-*

And scrapes with sawyer's arm each fiddle-string,
Goaded by Satan and his imps to sing;
Awakening notes that men, when drenched in wine
At public dinners, think exceeding fine;*
Or scribbles by the score such lines as swell
The Dunces' Corner in the Centinel.†
At last the obstetric printer's devil's hand
Exhibits Isaac's bantling to the land,
And gives a certain maid alike a hearse
And place of burial in his grave-yard verse;‡
Then shows the 'Indian's Fall' and dark despair---
Alas! my readers, what a fall was there!§

Yet Isaac's book may boast of merits two;
His paltry pieces are both short and few:¶
And still the work would be the more improved,
The more the number of the lines removed.

ris. Alas! he has farther exposed himself, and must take the consequences.

* See certain dinner-table odes.

† Formerly called the Poet's Corner, an appellation which was ever little deserved, and now less than ever.

‡ 'The Pride of the Village.'

§ 'The Fall of the Indian.' Mr Secretary Eaton has abused the Indian shamefully, in a literary way; and it is really too bad in Isaac to unite his forces with those of that eminent linguist against the unfortunate. The Indian never fell so low before. Still, it is to be hoped that he will recover from his bruises.

¶ Breve sit, quod turpiter audes.—*Juvenal.*

Isaac is friendless, or 't is very clear
Advice had saved him from a notice here.
Chop wood, O Isaac, make the anvil ring,
Dig mud, pick oakum, anything but sing!

'T is plain the county Cumberland, in Maine,
Contains no hospital for folks insane:
Though never there, the fact I nothing doubt,
Since N-al and M-ll-n run at large about.
When the moon waxes, plaintive M-ll-n howls;
But Johnny like a bull-dog snaps and growls;
Or strikes his brother poetasters mute,
With harsh vibrations of his three-stringed lute.
'Grant me, O Lord!' N-al's anxious father prayed,
'To see my son an ornament to trade.
Grant him to run the race his father ran,
A noted, honest, and respected man.'
Noted he is—for so much of the prayer
Was heard,—the rest was lost in empty air.
Then, in a notion shop, did Johnny find
Employ precisely fitted to his mind.
Had one mischance not happ'd, one grievous ill,
He there might sell soft soap and 'sodder'* still.

* *Soft sodder.* According to N-al, there are tin pots and pans, which drop in pieces when warm water is poured into them. The composition with which they are cemented he calls 'soft sodder.'

What time red Sirius rules the autumnal sky,
The cows go mad, the brains of poets fry,
And verses out of measure multiply.
'T was then, while on his master's errands flown,
Full on N-al's skull the raging dog-star shone.
Adieu the shop—he took to Baltimore
No jot of that small sense he had before.
From his fond parent's eye a tear-drop fell,
And his good angel sighed a last farewell.

Then, breaking bounds, our hero did appear
Critic, and novelist, and sonnetteer.
Such novels! They deserve the *name*, at least;
Their like was never seen in west or east.
Such criticisms! His victims all to kill
The critic lacked the power, but not the will;
He found his blows, though thick and fast applied,
Too light to penetrate each ass's hide.
As brazen implements are ever found,
And empty casks, to yield the greatest sound,
So, louder than the rest our hero roared,
And over lesser owls superior soared.
O for a tongue! to tell how Johnny N-al
Broke common decency upon the wheel;
What notoriety he gained, and fame---
The pillory and the gibbet give the same;
Till not the western hemisphere at length
Gave scope sufficient to his clumsy strength.

ıen, 'for his country's good' he crossed the tide:
'ood bye, good riddance, John,' his country cried.
ware what passenger the transit made,
ıe packet owners no insurance paid.
A raving lunatic he crossed the main,
raging madman he returns again.
ıasmodic energy, galvanic starts,
ake the sum total of his wit and parts.
ook at his poems, where each ray of light
by a veil of tinsel hid from sight;
here wondering nominatives strain their eyes,
ıd call for verbs;—in vain—no verb replies;*
here every line and every word we scan,
ies 'I am Ego N-al's; beat me who can!'
t, let me do the bilious bard no wrong—
o pilfered harp was his, no borrowed song;

* I have not mentioned all, nor half of N-al's violations of ummar. As to sense, there is little or none in his poetic effu-ns. There is one piece, especially, (in which an eagle rising m his nest is compared to 'a rank of young war-horses terri-bright,') which sets gravity at defiance. We may, in form-an estimate of his handy-work, derive some assistance m his own words. 'It is,' he says, 'either poetry or down-ht nonsense.' Poetry it certainly is not. I am the less in-ed to admit this offender to benefit of clergy, as he does not self carry on war according to the laws of nations. What-r prisoners have fallen into his critical hands, he has uniform-reated with more than savage barbarity. *Hæc satis ad ju-em.*

His freaks and pranks were his, and his alone;
His faults were infinite, but all his own:
Still, as his blundering fingers swept the lyre,
Amidst much smoke were seen some sparks of fire.

N-al, fare thee well! I do not wish thee worse
Than reading over thine own prose and verse.
I pray the powers to patch thy mental flaw,
Or send thee a kind keeper, and clean straw.

This much I 'll say for L-gg-t,*—he 's not rude;
His muse begs pardon—hopes she don't intrude.†
To praise her song though rigid Truth denies,
The modest shall find favor in my eyes.

A glorious planet in the zenith beams;
From north to south its golden radiance streams:
'T is he whose merit Yankee songsters feel
And imitate---but English scribblers steal:
'T is he whose accents, whether grave or gay,
Like flames electric round the heart-strings play.
'T is he who stands among the highest high,
'One of the few who are not born to die;'‡

* The author of 'Leisure Hours at Sea.'

† Metuens ne crimen pœna sequatur.

‡ I trust Mr Halleck will excuse me for altering and using two of his noble lines. As the English journals attempted to purloin the whole piece from him, I hope he will pardon a smaller freedom in his countryman.

'T is he whose strong-winged genius never halts:
We love him better for his very faults;
For faults in Halleck's glowing measure run:*
So spots obscure the surface of the sun.
Still the hot spirit, the pervading soul
Breathes through each number, and redeems the whole.
The careless poet has inscribed a name
Not to be blotted from the book of Fame;
A name that Yankees to be born shall view,
And boast that Halleck was a Yankee too.
Dear Halleck, Nature's favorite and mine,
Curst be the hand that plucks a hair of thine:
Accept the tribute of a muse inclined
To bow to nothing, save the power of mind.
Bard of Bozzaris, shall thy native shore
List to thy harp and mellow voice no more?
Shall we, with skill like thine so nigh at hand,
Import our music from a foreign land?
While Mirror M-rr-s chants in whimpering note,
And croaking D-na strains his screech-owl throat;
While crazy N-al to metre shakes his chains,
And fools are found to listen to his strains;

* Mr Halleck evidently writes carelessly. Scarce one of his lines is constructed according to the rules of rhythm; but, in him, this is a trifling fault. If this man studied like Spr-g-e, what might we not expect from him? *Agnosco procerem!*

While childish Natty P. the public diddles,
And L-nt and R-ckw-ll scrape his second fiddles;
While Brooks,* and Sands,† and Smith, and either
Clark,
In chase of Phœbus, howl, and yelp, and bark,
Wilt thou be silent? Wake, O Halleck, wake!
Thine and thy country's honor are at stake.
Wake, and redeem the pledge; thy vantage keep;
'T is pity one like thee so long should sleep.

In aid of Science, to extend her lore,
To let in light where all was dark before,
To waken infant Freedom into birth,
To sound the trump of Reason through the earth,
To raise the lowly, was the Press designed---
Bright emanation of the Godhead's mind!
Whose silent, but not less resistless sway,
Mankind, e'en stiff-necked Yankees, must obey.
In this free land the engine's mighty use
Is fully equalled by its foul abuse.
We trust a steam-boat to her engineers
Alone; a tailor only, wields the shears

* Brooks. An inveterate scribbler for the New York papers; himself the conductor of a newspaper.

† Sands. Half author of a deceased poem called Yamoyden. I may say of him that, *plus lactis habet quàm sanguinis*. The others will be noticed in their proper place.

That shape our garments; but the great machine,
That ought to keep our lives and letters clean,
In charge of many a pair of hands is found,
Scarce fit to turn a grindstone's handle round.
Does some smart cobbler to the winds disperse
His ends, and, like his shoe soles, creak in verse,
Some printer's devil throw away his stick,
Bit by poetic maggot to the quick,
Forthwith Sir Oracle is seen to squint
At the poor public through some paltry print.
Not mine the task to tell what ills ensue—
At least not all, I 'll merely note a few.
The wax still sticking to his fingers' ends,
The upstart Wh-tt-r, for example, lends
The world important aid to understand
What 's said, and sung, and printed in the land.
Unchecked by modesty, our Johnny Raw
Instructs his elders, and expounds the law;
Pronounces, *ex cathedrâ*, on the worth
Of poems, novels, annuals, and so forth;
And, with God-only-knows-how-gotten light,
Informs the nation what is wrong or right.
On men and things alike his strictures fall,
The self-appointed judge decides on all.
Proud of some scores of barely decent lines,
Heavens, how he swells! and how his genius shines!

Rich in a wisdom never learned at school,
To him the son of Sirach was a fool.
The cushion of an editorial chair
Must, sure, inclose some spell of virtue rare!
Like Wh-tt-r, hosts, and each self-deemed a sage,
Corrupt the taste and judgment of the age:
But, as a cure for scorpion stings is found
In crushing other scorpions on the wound,
Whatever dirt one zany's sheets display,
Some rival zany wipes, in part, away.*
When, Wh-tt-r, thou didst hoist thy cock-boat's sail—
And leave the harbour with the wind in tail,
I did not deem so soon to see thee sink,
Brought to, all standing, in the sea of ink:
For thee a life more private had been best;
Ne sutor ultra—prithee guess the rest.†

* ——Audis,
Jupiter, hæc, nec labra moves, quum mittere vocem
Debueras, vel marmoreus vel æneus? *Juvenal.*

† I allude here to Wh-tt-r's occupation, not as a matter of reproach, but to exemplify the manner in which the press is, in many instances, conducted. An artisan's shop is a nursery of useful citizens, seldom of scholars and critics, and not often of poets. He, the best years of whose life are dedicated to the acquisition of manual dexterity, has no time to learn to judge of art, science and literature. If, however, a handicraftsman chooses to tread the paths of learning, modesty is his best policy; but neither Wh-tt-r, nor other editors of his stamp, are ever heard to make this admission, 'I do not know.' The great mechanic Frank-

Wit, like a red-hot rapier, wounds two ways;
cuts the foe, and burns the hand that sways.
ask, has Henry F-nn's much boasted wit
rawn ever blood, or scorched his fingers yet?
ar famed for acting, for good conduct more,
kilful to set the boxes in a roar,
ormed at the social board to give delight,
' is pity that he ever learned to write.
'eeds of his sorry play be nothing said---
eace to its ghost, I war not on the dead:
' is with the rhymester I must pick a crow;
et forth in proper light his rhymes shall show.
In conversation, o'er the cheerful glass,
. happy, quick-imagined pun may pass:
ut puns premeditated, set to time,
nd strung, like onions on a rope, in rhyme,
'hough puffed by all the editorial crew,
nd sung by Henry F-nn, will never do.*

n, when he was editor of a paper, confined his remarks to subcts he understood. May Wh-tt-r, R-ckw-ll, and others, prot by this illustrious example. *Noscenda est mensura sui.* luch more could I say to editors of this description,

Sed quid opus teneras mordaci radere vero
Auriculas? *Persius.*

* Alluding to certain hard studied convivial effusions. I now not how they were received when spoken or sung, but hen they appeared in print, no one laughed.

Yet gains he the applauses of the press;
For Fashion rules in letters as in dress.
One fool makes many---even timid sheep
Where the bell-wether sprang will also leap;
When one hound yelps, the others all give tongue;
Had Hood ne'er chanted, F-nn had never sung.
Hood on a vicious charger bravely rides;
His wretched mimic, F-nn, an ass bestrides.
Heaven help the grammar! He assaults the verbs,
And conquering on, the A. B. C. disturbs;
Puts adverbs, nouns, and adjectives to rout,
And turns the tripes of syntax inside out.
Help, help, good men, to put the parts of speech
Safe from his mangling poniard, out of reach.
'Not laugh at F-nn!' exclaim the critic crew;
'Nor at his book!' Indeed, my friends, I do.
In every self-styled *Comic* page, I meet
Some thrice told tale, stale joke, or low conceit.
I find his Attic salt, by every test,
Base Glauber, or but Epsom at the best.
O for some plaintive interjection, fit
To tell my pity for his costive wit.*
Straight on the fire, good F-nn, thine Annual cast,
Let this emphatically be thy 'last.'

* Of all the failures of the American press, none are so lamentable as the Comic Annual, unless, indeed, the official communications of the present cabinet be adduced. Comic, indeed!

Not only th' emporium of the north
Her hordes of lettered Vandals vomits forth;
But senior sister Salem too, can boast
She adds at least one champion to the host.
As in the field a cumbrous twentyfour
Above less noisy twelves is heard to roar,
So ponderous P-ck-r-ng sways the northern flank,
And belches volumes of undoubted blank.
Ye Salemites, my friendly counsel take—
Plant not for him the gibbet or the stake;
Let not the fear of witchcraft shake your souls,
To roast your poet, were a waste of coals—
He is no wizard. Not the less a sin
It were to hang or burn the bard of Lynn.*
Lynn, once renowned for rocks and lots of leather,
Has now an awl to peg them fast together;
A bard to chant her tides, and wondrous things,
In lines as rugged as the soil he sings.
Why should not L-w-s write? We daily see
Whole troops who write more badly still than he.
His were the follies of a tender age,
As proves his every line, and every page.
At last he wisely stays his mad career,
And moves with credit in an humbler sphere.

* This gentleman is the father of a puling babe, the name of which I have forgotten, though I have seen it. It is now, I believe, defunct. As the annalist of Lynn, the bereaved parent need not blush. He has redeemed his character.

There 's balm in Gilead, L-w-s, for thy case;
I 'll treat thee well---repentance merits grace:
The Lord forbid that I should treat as crimes,
Regretted faults—I mean thy school-boy rhymes.
Not born to reach the ladder's topmost round,—
To know it, proves at least thy judgment sound.
Now, having given ambitious clambering o'er,
Farewell, good L-w-s;—go, and sin no more.

Shakspeare could weekly serve a drama up
From the mere overflowings of his cup;
Could well afford, from his exhaustless mine,
To fling a handful of his pearls to swine;
But such a mover of the mind appears
On earth but once in twice three thousand years.
Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, and Ben,
Still wrote and burnt, and wrote and burnt again
An hundred times, and wore the painful file,
Before they deemed their pieces worth the while.
Our Yankee play-wrights write like Shakspeare, fast;
But that 's the first resemblance, and the last:
Here 's St-ne, for instance, with his Indian piece,
His broken English, clap-traps, paint, and grease,
Throws mother Nature into ague fits,
And for his pains five hundred dollars gets;
Then, conscience smitten, for forgiveness prays,---
His work, he says, but cost him forty days.*

* ———Dic, O vanissime, quis te
Festinare jubet?

What 's done in hurry ill is ever done;
So says the adage, and 't is proved by St-ne.
Five hundred dollars!---he deserves the rack;
At least the law of Moses on his back.

O sun! O moon! O stars! Shall Europe see
Our country's intellectual poverty?
What! shall the Drama to the world appear
Enveloped in Cimmerian darkness here?
Shall B-rk-r, St-ne, and Sm-th, and M-rr-s stand
To represent the talent of the land?
Forbid it, gods! Rise, classic Hillhouse, rise;
Mix in the contest, and bear off the prize.
True, thou hast faults---what gem did ever shine
Free from the stains of earth, in any mine?
Rise in thy strength, let step-dame Britain find
Herself o'ertaken in the march of mind:
Cast all her bards, but Shakspeare, into shade---
Thy country asks it; be her voice obeyed:---
Rise in thy mellower age, with taste mature---
Give us one play, forever shall endure:
Write not for 'stars,' for Forrest or for Kean;
Try not thy pinion in a flight so mean.
What though her modest bard Columbia slights,
While Metamora runs for twenty nights?*

* Populi frons durior hujus,
Qui sedet et spectat.

Not thine, but ours, O Hillhouse, is the shame---
Our children's sons shall glory in thy name.

In times of old, Imperial Rome, we read,
Was doomed by three sharp swords at once to bleed.
We too, if I may name small things with great,
Are trebly curst with a triumvirate;
For Pr-nt-ce, M-rr-s, and the blockhead Cl-rk,
Like poachers' dogs, in yelping concert bark
At honest men. Bestow on one a kick,
The others join, and bite you to the quick.
Whatever counterfeit is coined by one,
The others stamp the current mark upon.
Offend the one—the fellow, wrong or right,
Secure of backers, scruples not to fight.*

Behold the bully butcher Pr-nt-ce stand,
With ready cleaver lifted in his hand;
And, save his kindred crew, the world must feel
The ragged edge of that all smiting steel.
Does a poor author win some small renown?
With brutal fury Pr-nt-ce knocks him down,
Stabs him---and, still insatiate, turns around
His rusty knife within the victim's wound.

* The papers conducted by these worthies form, or rather formed a kind of Unholy Alliance, into which several minor powers were occasionally admitted. I believe that M-rr-s lately seceded from the league, and Pr-nt-ce has abdicated.

Just or unjust, to him 't is all the same;
No worth, no talent his blind rage can tame.
On filthy chopping-block with murderous axe,
Many a better than himself he hacks.
Detested wretch, surcharged with spite and spleen,
Curst critic, literary Sawney Bean,*
Hast thou so long on human offal fed,
Slandered and railed unchallenged for thy bread,
To think that none dare meet thee, eye to eye?
I 'll teach thee better, sirrah, by and by.
Back to thy shambles, and with Cl-rk renew
Thine intercourse, with Mirror M-rr-s too;
Praise and be praised by these and other bards,
As black-legs help each other cheat at cards:
Requite their flatteries in thy low Review;
Scratch one another, as sore Scotchmen do;
Think not to office 't is the certain way,
To soil the noble name of Henry Clay;
Go, seek a patron more upon thy level;
Go, plaster Andrew Jackson,—or the Devil;
Go, curry favor with the sire of crime,
Sure of the benefit some future time.†

* Sawney Bean was a Scotch robber and murderer, who fed on the bodies of his victims.

† Aude aliquid brevibus Gyaris et carcere dignum,
Si vis esse aliquis. *Juvenal.*

This may seem harsh, nay, personal. I grant it so; but let the reader turn to a file of the New England Review, and if he

The chief thus scourged, his men shall share his fate;
I 'll throw my gauntlet at the second rate,
Port Folio Cl-rk, whose efforts to amuse
Make women yawn, and give the men the blues;
I mean those few who read him. Pass him by;
I 'll leave him wallowing in his southern sty,
And turn to Mirror M-rr-s, he whose head
Is as the Fever River rich in lead;
Which, as it weekly melts, and leaves its soil,
Serves, in the form of types, his reams to spoil.
Bear witness Brier Cliff, his paltry play,
And his warped Mirror's false reflected ray.

One bard there is I almost fear to name,
Much doubting whether to applaud or blame.
In P-rc-v-l's productions, wheat and chaff
Are mixed, like sailor's tipple, half and half;
But, duly bolted through the critic's mill,
I find the better part is wholesome still.*

has an appetite for garbage, he will therein find wherewith to gratify it. He will find rancor, indiscriminate abuse, and blackguardism, by wholesale. I refer only to the time when Pr-nt-ce conducted it. He will see not only Willis, but all his assistants, pursued for a whole year with the most bitter hostility. If he does not find enough in a single number to justify every word in the text, I will consent to stand reproved, now and forever.

This man has gone to Kentucky, and New England is happily rid of him. It is said that he intends to write the life of Henry Clay, which may Heaven in its mercy forefend!

* I believe that Mr Percival's want of popularity is owing to

Diffuse, long-winded, feeble, out of joint,
Some of his verses lack both edge and point.
The rest for many a mortal sin atone;
Such even Bryant might be proud to own.
No more—unkind neglect has quenched his fires,
And cankering rust corrodes his silent wires;
Alike unmindful now of praise or blame,
'He sleeps, forgetful of his once bright fame.'

When Mediocrity his page displays,
And frontless courts a picked committee's gaze;
When such a picked committee vote he shines,
And pay him fifty dollars for his lines;
Such lines, as, judging by the gaps and rents
In sense and sound, were dear at fifty cents,
To say which merits pity most, is hard---
The paying critics or receiving bard.
Undaunted W-tm-re,* what I most admire
In thee, is not thy fancy or thy fire;
On these thy qualities I need not touch;
Bryant and Halleck have, perhaps, as much:

his poetic pride, which will not allow him to descend to cater for the prevailing taste. He will not deviate from his own standard of excellence, and what is worse, will bestow no care on his pieces. He ought to cultivate his talents.

* Prosper W-tm-re is the author of a volume of poems, of which 'Lexington' is the principal. It gained him a prize of fifty dollars.

No, 't is thy matchless courage, that could squint
Twice at thy sheets, and yet resolve to print:
Of triple brass or steel thy nerves must be;
Certain damnation wakes no awe in thee.*
What though our fathers beat the British sore?
Beneath thy hand they suffer ten times more;
And, tit for tat, our buried fathers feel
The random strokes of thy all-conquering steel.
No British bullet made their marrow thrill
As does, though cased in mould, great W-tm-re's quill.
To flay thee, W-tm-re, gives me no delight;
'T would please me much to see thee better write:
But, like a mad dog's bite, thine ill, I 'm sure
The actual cautery alone can cure.
The doctor, therefore, mindful of thy youth,†
Administers a dose of wholesome truth;
He tells thee, Prosper, that the laurel tree
Is yet a seed that bears one leaf for thee,
And bids thee, like thy namesake in the play,
To break thy staff, and fling thy book away.

Ye master tradesmen, to my words give heed,
I 'll give ye counsel that ye greatly need;

* Credite, me vobis folium recitare Sibyllæ.

† Though Prosper W-tm-re is in the decline of life, this does not hinder him from being a very young poet, and that in more senses than one.

Does any 'prentice take it in his head
To pen a stanza,---see him blistered, bled:
If that won't answer, straight his wages pay,
And give him leave, or else he 'll run away:
Or, to your tender feelings give the reins---
Do him an almsdeed, and beat out his brains.
Ye 'prentice boys, who one day would be men,
Stick to your handy-works---eschew the pen;
Better to touch hot iron than a quill,
Or play with firebrands in a powder-mill.
What dire exposure and what bitter wo
Bad verses cause, shall Samuel W--dw-rth show.
He too, like you, once earned his daily bread
With hands more profitable than his head;
Till, blinded by some Jack o' Lanthorn sprite,
He took for Phœbus---he resolved to write---
One splendid lyric to the future past,
His first thing excellent, as well as last.*
From that bright haystack fire no phœnix rose,---
A goose its cinders merely did compose,
Whose eggs, though hatched with long and painful brooding,
Brought neither empty praise nor solid pudding;

* 'The Bucket' did W--dw-rth credit. His novel and other subsequent productions I will not offend myself by naming. Thirty years of disappointment have not taught this unhappy person discretion. Even now a volume of his is announced as being in the press.

But yet, untaught by many a griping fast,
The foolish fowl will cackle to the last.
Ye who to soar on paper wings prepare,
Be warned by W--dw-rth's fall, in time beware.

Fresh lots of fools our markets yearly yield,
Whole cohorts from Manhattoes take the field;
Nor fewer Philadelphia rears than these;
In her they breed like skippers in a cheese.
Time was, when quite another race of men,
Abode within the town of William Penn.
A broad-brimmed hat ensconced each knowledge-box,
Their standard works were Bunyan and George Fox;
Their strict economy and sterling sense
Gave no encouragement to vain pretence.
The times are changed---M'H-nry, Sm-th, M'C-ll,*
And more, like amorous cats discordant squall;
Nay, even B-rk-r in the lists appears,
To yield the tribute of his 'Smiles and Tears.'†

* M'C-ll is the author of a composition entitled 'The Troubadour.' He writes merely for amusement, and has it all to himself.

† The person here commemorated is the author of several plays, of which 'Smiles and Tears' is one. His poetic performances would be worse, were that possible, than his dramatic attempts. The poem (I call it so, for want of a term sufficiently contemptuous) mentioned in the text, is called 'Little Red Riding Hood.'

In kind, with interest, I pay his toils;
Tears for his rashness, for his folly smiles:
And when I listen as the tuneful dolt
Sings how a beast a little maid did bolt,
And gravely draws this moral from his song,
That maids to talk with beasts do very wrong,
I quite forget that now I rank with men,
And think I 'm in my granny's arms again.
Still Philadelphia some taste betrays;
She damns his poems, as she damned his plays;
But with an alderman and soldier too,
What can the fear of aught but hunger do?*

O miracle! What next! The greatest owl
Alive salutes us with an Irish howl;
And with a screech of horrible distress
Proclaims the wonders of the 'Wilderness.'
Cease, cease, M'H-nry,† cease for Heaven's dear sake,
Thy other drugs are bad enough to take:

* Mr B-rk-r was once a brave soldier, and since, an alderman; now he is a poet.

Illuc heu! miseri traducimur.

† *Peregrina est bellua.* This fellow is an Irishman and a physician. In one of his novels (the Wilderness) he brings George Washington on his knees before his heroine: 'Think of that, Master Brook!' He has lately sinned in another sort; *videlicet*, in rhyme.

Think of the infamy thy novels gained;
Think of the name of Washington profaned;
Proceed not thus, still adding crime to crime,—
What, what the Devil prompted thee to rhyme?
Beside, the fashion never was in vogue
To woo the Muses in the Munster brogue.
Put by the pen---enough is given to fame;
Or rather, sooth to speak, Big O, to shame.

Buy up two broken stools, at trifling cost;
And one supplies the leg the other lost.
I 'll sell thee, reader, cheap, a brace of fools,
To take and treat as one might treat the stools.
Both are half witted, yet, if so Heaven please,
The twain, perhaps, may make one perfect piece.
The one is rather better than the other,
And so I 'll make the numskull sell his brother.*
Th-mps-n is bad at sonnets, Sm-th at verse,†
Wretched at prose, and at the drama worse.
Who offers ninepence? Four pence, shall I say?
Take them for nothing, and with thanks away.

Off hats, off hats! for lo! upon the stage
The Aristarchus of this scribbling age:

* Query. Which?

† Th-mps-n is a poet merely: Sm-th is a poet and play-wright also. The principal of his abortions is entitled 'Caius Marius.'

A man who knows that heated iron is hot,
That ice is cold---ye gods! what knows he not?
Art, science, metaphysics, and all that,
And the nine muses, strut beneath his hat:
Critiques dogmatic in his brain are bred;
O happy hat, to cover such an head!
'Is W-lsh,' * you cry, 'with inspiration big?
As well an elephant might dance a jig.'
Alas! he writes no verses now; but once,
Before the general voice proclaimed him dunce,
Such fruits of toil his sullied sheets confest,
As not e'en Kettle's stomach could digest.
No room the worthy trash collector found
For Robert's poems in that burial-ground,
His book; but Robert, in his next review,
Set down poor Kettle for a blockhead too.†

* This critic is a striking verification of the adage, 'the greatest clerks are not the wisest men.' In the multiplicity of his interminable scribblings, I defy his admirers to point out a single original thought, or one line of inspiration. He has not even gained a place in Pierpont's common place-books. Still he writes on,

Et quodcunque semel chartis illeverit, omnes
Gestiet a furno reduntes scire lacuque,
Et pueros et anus. *Horace.*

† In damning Kettle's book, W-lsh says, 'We too have written poems,' or words to that effect; and it seems from the tone of the article, that the insertion of W-lsh's lines among the 'Speci-

A negro, thus, whose shins his brother hurts,
Their common color to reproach converts.

The roll is called, my work is almost done—
The last and greatest name remains alone:
But ill the censor's public debt were paid
To slight the mighty master of the trade.
Search the rich stores of Greek and Roman lore,
Or turn the page of modern letters o'er;
But look for nothing better, in its kind,
Than that which bears the impress of the mind
Of Byrant;* he who shines without a peer,
The brightest star that lights our hemisphere:
Clear, smooth, and strong, with classic beauty graced,
He writes no line his friends could wish effaced;
And, like a certain potentate of old,
Whate'er he touches he converts to gold.
Few are his gems, but worth a mighty sum;—
None but Pitt diamonds from his work-shop come.

mens' would have had an important influence on the critic's opinions. Perhaps I should not call the said book a burial ground. If Kettle buried some, he certainly performed the office of resurrection man for others.

Note extra, for the especial benefit of Mr W-lsh. The christian name of Bishop Porteus was Bielby, and not 'Belly,' as the critic calls it in his edition of the British Poets.

* Ingenium cui sit, cui mens divinior, atque os
Magna sonaturum, des nominis hujus honorem.

Write, Byrant, write; the land's reproach redeem,
Exalt thy country in the world's esteem.
Whatever theme inspires, I 'm sure of this,
That if thou wouldst, thou canst not sing amiss.

Now have I thumped each lout I meant to thump,
And my worn pen is nothing but a stump;
Now have I shot my shafts at beast and brute,
And trampled reptiles with my spurning foot:
Many have suffered, many gone scot free,—
[illegible] unworthy of a shot from me.
[illegible] who deem their laurels still unshorn,
[illegible] ce thank my utter scorn;
[illegible] e reform my censures tend,
Bow to the st[illegible] sorrow, and amend.
I 've driven the scalpel deeply, to be sure;
But desperate means a desperate ill must cure.
Let Candor judge what motive nerved my arm,
And if I meant my country good, or harm:
On her fair verdict safely I rely,
Nor wish to draw my finger from the pie.
For the bought suffrage of a venal press,
I prize it little, and I fear it less.

For ye whose backs, and sides, and shoulders still
Twinge with my blows, and, may be, ever will;
Whose yard-long ears my honest muse offends,
I 'll tell ye, dunces, how to get amends:

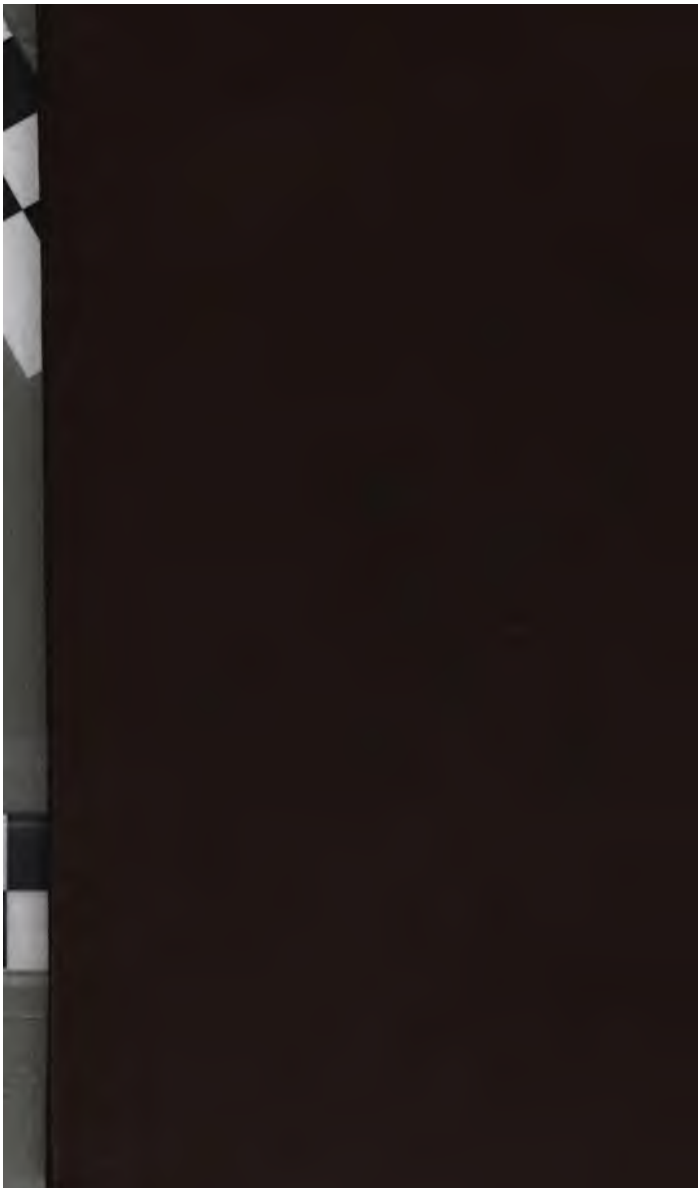
Serve this, as each has served his proper line,
Resume your quills, and do your worst on mine.

To those who listen to my humble lay,
Untouched and unattempted, this I say;
No private malice on my course propelled,
No anger spurred me, and no fear withheld;
In these my strictures on my fellow men,
TRUTH held the light, and CONSCIENCE drove the pen.

FINIS.

Serve this, as each has served his proper line,
Resume your quills, and do your worst on mine.

To those who listen to my humble lay,
Untouched and unattempted, this I say;
No private malice on my course propelled,
No anger spurred me, and no fear withheld;
In these my strictures on my fellow men,
TRUTH held the light, and CONSCIENCE drove the pen.

FINIS.

AUG 17 1936